

Minutes
Wildlife Resources Committee
2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E.
Suite 1252 East Tower
Atlanta, GA 30334

March 24, 2009

Attending:

Committee Members

Bill Archer, Chairman
David Allen
Gene Bishop
Warren Budd
Joe Hatfield
Mabel Jenkins
Ray Lambert
Bob Rutland
Jim Walters
Tom Wheeler
Bill Carruth, Board Chairman, ex-officio

Board Members

Earl Barrs
Jenny Lynn Bradley
Walter Hudson
Phyllis Johnson
Loyce Turner
Jim Tysinger
Philip Watt

Visitors

Thomas Farmer, The Nature Conservancy
Shana Udvardy, The Georgia Conservancy
Bettie Sleeth, Home Builders Association of Georgia
Katie Kirkpatrick, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce
Andrew Schock, The Conservation Fund
Michelle Cable, The Nature Conservancy
Andy Fleming, Friends of Georgia State Parks
Skin Edge, Allied Golf

Staff Members

Noel Holcomb
Chris Clark
Carol Couch
Susan Shipman
Steve Friedman
Dan Forster
Marlin Gottschalk
Becky Kelley
Ray Luce
Jim Ussery
Karl Burgess
Linda MacGregor
David Crass
Todd Holbrook
Doralyn Kirkland
Wally Woods
Steve Saunders
Connie Buck
John Bowers
John Thompson
Sally Winchester
Paul Nelson
Brad Gane
Sherry Crew-Jay
Emily Hitchcock
Lauren Curry
Sarah Dearman
Mary Ann Evans
Hellen Harris

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Jim Scarbrough, Gwinnett County Water

Phil Zinsmeister, Sierra Club

Ronny Just, Georgia Power Company

Graham Holden, Jones Day

Bryan Tolar, Georgia Agribusiness Council

Nathaniel Hunt, Southern Environmental Law Center

The March 24, 2009 meeting of the Wildlife Resources Committee was called to order by Board Chairman Bill Carruth.

Chairman Carruth called on Mr. Archer, Chairman of the Wildlife Resources Committee.

Mr. Archer called on John Bowers, Assistant Chief, Game Management, Wildlife Resources Division (WRD), to present a briefing on Proposed Amendments to Hunting Regulations, Chapter 391-4-2, and Firing Ranges, Rule 391-4-9-.02.

Mr. Bowers stated that the proposed amendments to regulations governing the hunting of game animals and game birds would cover the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 hunting seasons. He further stated that starting in January 2009, eight public meetings were held around the state to provide opportunities for the public to provide input into the development of hunting regulations. He added that the public also submitted emails and written letters, and that input on hunting regulations had been received from 328 participants. He further added that in February 2009, WRD examined the public input and biological information collected, and formulated the proposed amendments. He called attention to the information included in the Board packet.

He stated that the proposed amendments would be presented for public notice, and that three public hearings would be held April 14 and April 15. He further stated that at the May 27, 2009 Board meeting, the Board would be briefed on input from the public hearings, and that the proposed amendments would be presented to the Board for action. He added that in June, the popular hunting guide would be developed, and would be printed and distributed to the public in July 2009.

He reviewed major changes in the proposed hunting regulations for 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 season. He presented the proposed deer season dates and specific zones, weaponry and length in days. He stated that the proposed amendments would reflect statutory changes, managed white-tailed deer populations either sex days, set seasons for rails and woodcock, expand alligator opportunity, expand counties open to bear hunting in north Georgia, regulate hunting and other activities on wildlife management areas (WMAs) and other state lands, adjust scheduling of hunting seasons in accordance with calendar date changes and changes to firing range rules.

Mr. Bowers called attention to a handout that involved a rule change from WRD's Fisheries Management Section that would amend Rule 391-4-3 relating to Public Fishing Areas (PFAs). He stated that the proposed amendments provide for alligator and waterfowl hunting on PFAs that would comply with fishing and hunting regulations. He explained that this change was necessary and would address a conflict in the current process. He further stated that the proposed amendments would be inserted into the packet of amendments for hunting regulations to be sent to Legislative Counsel for public notice the first of April. He added that these changes would also be

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incorporated into public hearings to be held in April. (Handout and PowerPoint attached hereto and made a part hereof)

Discussion ensued.

Chairman Carruth complimented Phyllis Johnson for her reappointment to the Board of Natural Resources by Governor Perdue for another seven-year term.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.